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## **Philosophical Transactions**

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struck near *Nantwich* in *Cheshire*; the Title of the Book being, *Anatome Pueri de Cælo tacti*: such Relations, when truly made, well deserving to be carefully recorded for farther consideration.

*Of some Books lately publish'd.*

*RELATIONS OF DIVERS CURIOUS VOYAGES*, by *Monf. Thevenot*; the third *Tome*, in *French*. This Book contains chiefly, the Ambassie of the *Dutch* into *China*, translated out of the *Dutch* manuscript: A Geographical description of *China*, translated out of a *Chinese* Author by *Martinius*: And the Account, which the Directors of the *Dutch* East-India Company made to the States General, touching the state of affairs in the East-Indies, when their late Fleet parted from thence. To touch some things of a *Geographical* and *Philosophical* nature, contained therein, we shall take notice;

1. How the Kingdom of *China* is peopled; there being according to the best computation (which is there made with singular care) above 58 millions of Men, not counting Magistrates, Soldiers, Priests, Eunuchs, Women and Children; so that it may not be altogether strange, if one should affirm, there were 200 millions of people, of all sorts, in that Kingdom.

2. That *Catay* is nothing else, but the Six Northern Provinces of *China*, separated from the other *Nine*, by the great River *KIANG*; and that the City *Cambalu* is the same with that of *Peking*: the *Tartars*, who carry every three years their Tribute to the Emperor of *China*, constantly calling the said Provinces and City by those names of *Catay*, and *Cambalu*.

3. That *China* is so well furnisht with Rivers, and cut Channels, that men may go from the most Southern to the most Northern part thereof by water, except one daies journey; as the *Dutch* Ambassadors did, embarking at *Canton*, which is 23 d. 48 m. Northern Latitude, and landing at *Peking*, which is about 40 d; having only travell'd one daies journey over some Mountains of the Province *Kiamsi*.

4. That the people of *China* are exceeding industrious Husband-  
band.

bandmen, making, among other waies of improving their soile, great use of Flouding.

5. That the *Physicians* of *China* do cure Sicknesse with much ease, and in a short time: That they have very ancient Books of the nature and vertues of Herbs, Trees and Stones: That their Modern Physicians (as well as their Ancient ones did) write of the Prognosticks, Causes, Effects, &c. of Diseases. That their Remedies consist for the most part of *Simples* and *Decoctions*, *Cauteries*, *Frictions*; without the use of *Bloud-letting*: That they have such an excellent skill and method in feeling the *Pulse*, that by the means thereof they discover even the most latent causes of Diseases; taking a good half hour, when they visit a Patient, in feeling and examining his Pulse: That they prescribe much the use of *The*; and the drinking alwayes warme, whatever they drink: To the custome of both which it's imputed, that the inhabitants of *China* do spit very little, nor are subject to the Stone or Gout: That they prize highly the Root *Ginseng*, as an extraordinary Restorative and Cordiall, recovering frequently with it agonizing persons; one pound of it being paid with 3 pounds of silver. As for their *Chymists*, (of which they have also good store) they go beyond ours, promising not only to make Gold, but to give Immortality.

6. That their *Nobility* is raised from Learning and Knowledge, without regard to Bloud or Parentage, excepting the Royall Family.

7. That in *CHEK IAN*, a maritime Province, whence is the shortest cut of *China* to *Japan*, is the best and plentifullest *Silk-trade* in the world: And that there every year the Mulberries are cutt, and kept down, that they grow not into Trees, for the easier gathering of the Leaves; there being a *double* Silk-harvest in that Country, as there is in severall other parts of the East-indies; (both which there is hope, will shortly be imitated in *Virginia*.)

8. That the way of making *Porcelane* is this: (*Which is the rather inserted here, because it agrees so well with an Account, we received a while since from a very Curious and intelligent Person of Amsterdam.*) There is in the Province of *Nankin* a Town, call'd

*Goelsfol*; whence they draw the Earth for *Porcelaine*, which is found between the Rocks of Mountains. This Earth they beat very small, and stamp it to a very fine Powder, and then put it into Tubs fill'd with water; where the finest part sinks to the bottom. Afterwards 'tis kneaded in the form of small Cubes, of the weight of about 3. *Catti* (a *Catti* being 20 Ounces.) These pieces thus wrought are sold to the people, that commonly in great numbers fetch them, coming from the Town *Sintefimo* (otherwise *Jention*) in the Province of *Kiansy*, being about 50 miles distant from *Wotfing*, neer the City *K I A N S Y*; which people transport them to their homes, and there bake them in this manner: They heat their Ovens well, for the space of 15 daies successively, and then keep them so close, that no Air may get in; and after 15 other daies are pass'd, they open the Oven in the presence of an Officer, who takes every fifth vessel of each fashion for the service of the Emperor: Which done, the rest is sold to those of *Ueienien*, whence it is transported all over the Country. So that the Earth is not prepared, in *Nankin*, where 'tis found, because the people of that Province have not the skill of working it, as the other above-mention'd; who also alone have the Art of coloring it, which they keep as a great Secret, not teaching it to any, but their Children and next Kindred.

9. That *Musk* is nothing else, but the Testicles of a Beast like a Dear, found in the Province of *Honan*; and that, when 'tis good and unmixed, as it comes from the Animal, they sell it even in *Nankin* and *Pekin*, for 30. or 35. *Teyls* (that is, about so many Crowns) the *Catti*, or 20. *ſy*.

Many other curious informations might be borrow'd from this Author, concerning the Customs, Studies, Exercises of the *Chinese*; of the number of the people of each Province; of the Natural productions of the Earth and Rivers there; of the Structure and Antiquity of their Wall; of the Magnificence of their Porcelain Tower &c; but, remitting for these things to the Book it self, we shal only add a piece of Oeconomy, used by the *Holland-Merchants* in their Commerce with *China*; which is, that they dry abundance of Sage-leaves, role them up, and prepare

prepare them like *The*, and carrying it to *China*, as a rare drogue, get for one pound of it, fourtimes as much *The*.

*A DISCOURSE ABOUT THE CAUSES OF THE INUNDATION OF THE NILE*, in *French*. The Author of this Book is Monsieur *de la Chambre*, who being perswaded from several Circumstances, that accompany the Overflowing of this River, that it cannot proceed from Rain, ventures to assign for a Cause of it, and of all the other effects that happen at the time of its swelling, the *Niter*, wherewith that water abounds.

The discourse having six parts, the Author endeavours to shew in the

*First*, that the Waters of the *Nile* are Nitrous, explicating the Nature of Salt, and Saltpeter, and imputing the fertility of the Earth, as well as the fecundity of Animals, to Salt. Where he shews, that all things, that serve to improve Land, are full of Salt; and that 'tis observ'd, that grain steep'd in Urine, before sowing, rises sooner, and becomes fuller and stronger, than else. Adding, that that, which renders the Seed of Animals prolifick, is, that one of the *Spermatick* veins hath its Origine from the *Emulgent*, through which the Nitrous and Saline Sero-fities, that discharge themselves into the Kidneys and Bladder, do pass.

In the *Second*, he examines, what is Fermentation, and how 'tis perform'd; affirming, that, what thrusts forth Plants in the Spring, is, that the Earth being fermented by the *Niter*, it harbours, the Nitrous spirits insinuate themselves into their Pores.

In the *Third* he treats of all the Circumstances, observable in the Inundation of the Nile. 'Tis affirm'd, that 3 or 4 days before that River begins to overflow, all its water is troubled: that then there falls a certain Dew, which hath a fermenting vertue, and leavens a Paste expos'd to the Air: that the Mud, which has been drawn out of the water, grows heavier, when the overflowing begins, then it was before, and that by the increase of the weight of that Mud, they Judge of the greatness of the approaching inundation. The Author pretends, that  
the

the Niter, which the *Nile* is stored with, is the cause of all these strange effects, and of many others, by him alledged. For, *saith he*, when the Nitre is heated by the heat of the Sun, it ferments, and mingling with the water, troubles it, and swells it, and makes it pass beyond its banks; after the same manner, as the Spirits in new Wine render it troubled, and make it boyle in the vessel. And it seems not likely to him, that the Mud, found in the *Nile*, should come a far off; for then it would at last so raise the banks of this River, that it would not be able to overflow them any longer. Whereas 'tis more than 2000 years, that the banks thereof are not grown higher, there being now requisite but 16. cubits for overflowing the Land, no more than there was in the time of *Herodotus*. Which shews, *saith he*, that this Mud is nothing but a volatil Niter, which exhaling, doth not increase the Earth. As for the *Ægyptian Dew*, and the increase of the weight of the Mud, he adscribes them to the same Cause. For, the spirits of Nitre abounding in the *Nile*, when raised into the Air with the vapors, that exhale continually from this River, there is made out of their mixture, a Dew, that refreshes the Air, makes sickness to cease, and produces all those admirable effects, that make the *Ægyptians* wish for it so passionately. And the same spirits of Niter, being joyned to the Paste, and to the Mud, raise the one, and augment the weight of the other. That, which Mr. *Buratini* observes, that at the time of this inundation, the Niter-pits of the neighbouring places vomit out liquid Niter, and that one may see issue out of the Earth abundance of Chrystals of Nitre, is alledged to fortify this conjecture; Which is yet more confirm'd by the Fertility, communicated to the Earth by the Mud of this River. For, plants do grow there in such abundance, that they would choak one another, if it were not remedied by throwing Sand upon the Fields; insomuch that the *Ægyptians* must take as much pains to spread Sand to lessen the fatness of their Land, as other Nations do, to spread dung or other manure upon theirs to increase the fatness.

In the *Fourth* and *Fifth*, the Author undertakes to prove, that all those strange effects cannot be attributed to Rain or Snow,  
and

and that the overflowing of the *Nilla* always happens at a certain day.

In the *Last*, he alledges some Relations, serving to confirm his Opinion: Which are too long here to insist upon.

*DE PRINCIPIIS ET RATIOCINATIONE GEOMETRARUM; Contra Factum Professorum Geometriæ; Authore Thomæ Hobbes.* It seems, that this Author is angry with all Geometricians, but himself; yea he plainly saith in the dedication of his Book, that *he invades the whole Nation of them*; and unwilling, it seems, to be call'd to an account for doing so, *He* will acknowledge no judge of *this* Age, but is full of hopes, that posterity will pronounce for him. Mean while he ventures to advance this *Dilemma*; *Eorum qui de iisdem rebus mecum aliquid ediderunt, aut solus insanio Ego, aut solus non insanio; tertium enim non est, nisi (quod dicet forte aliquis) insaniamus omnes.* Doubtless, one of these will be granted him.

As to the Book it self, he professes, that he doth not write it against *Geometry*, but *Geometers*; and that his design in it is, to shew, That there is no less uncertainty and falsity in the writings of *Mathematicians*, than there is in those of *Naturalists*, *Moralists*, &c. though he judges, that *Physicks*, *Ethicks*, *Politicks*, if they were well demonstrated, would be as certain as the *Mathematicks*.

Attacking the Mathematical Principles as they are found in Books, and withall some Demonstrations, he takes to task *Euclid* himself, instead of all, as the Master of all Geometricians, and with him his best interpreter, *Clavius*, examining in the *First* place, the *Principles* of *Euclid*: *Secondly*, Declaring false, what is superstructed upon them, whether by *Euclid*, or *Clavius*, or any *Geometer* whatsoever that hath made use of those or other (as he is pleased to entitle them) *false* Principles. *Thirdly*, Pretending, that he means so to combat all, both Principles and Demonstrations, undertaken by him, as that he will substitute better in their room, least he should seem to undermine the Science it self.



The particulars, which he undertakes to reform, are,

*Punctum;*

*Linea.*

*Terminus.*

*Linea Recta.*

*Superficies.*

*Superficiei Termini.*

*Superficies Plana,*

*Angulus* (Where he is large upon the *Angulus Contactus*.)

*Petitio prima Elem. 1. Euclidis;*

*Ratio.*

*Radix & Latus.*

*Prop. 16. El. 3.*

*Dimensio Circuli.*

*Magnitudo Circuli Hugeniana,*

*Sectio Anguli.*

*Ratio, quam habet recta composita ex Radio & Tangente*

*30. grad, ad Radium ipsum,*

*Propos. 47æ. Elem. 1. Demonstratio.*

*Addita est Appendix de Mediis proportionalibus in genere.*

KING SALOMONS PORTRAITURE OF OLD AGE; by John Smith, M.D. This Treatise being a *Philosophical* Discourse, though upon a *sacred* Theme, may certainly claim a place among *Philosophical* Transactions. Not here to mention the many other learned Notes, this Worthy Author gives upon that Hieroglyphical Description of Old Age, made by that Royal Pen-man of *Ecclesiastes*, cap. 12. We shall onely take notice of that surprizingly Ingenious one, there to be met with, concerning the Antiquity of the Doctrine of the *Blood's Circulation*: King *Salomon*, who lived neer 2700 years agoe, using such expressions, as may, to a considering Reader, very probably denote the same Doctrine, which the Sagacious Dr. *Harvey* has of late years so happily brought to light, and introduced into all the most Ingenuous Societies of Learned men: The *Pitcher*, mention'd in the quoted place, being Interpreted for the *Veines*, and the *Fountain*, for the *Right Ventricle of the Heart*, as the *Cistern*, for the *Left*; the *Wheele*, there spoken off, manifestly importing a *Circulation*, made by the *Great Artery* with its Branches, the principal Instrument thereof.